

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. An isolated and purified nucleic acid molecule encoding an infectious GBV-C.
2. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is RNA.
3. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is DNA.
4. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, wherein the molecule is about 9.4 kilobases in length.
5. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, wherein the molecule comprises SEQ ID NO:1.
6. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, further comprising a heterologous nucleic acid sequence.
7. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 6, wherein the heterologous nucleic acid sequence encodes a polypeptide.
8. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 6, wherein the polypeptide is a mammalian polypeptide.
9. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, further comprising a heterologous promoter.
10. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 9, wherein the heterologous promoter promotes transcription in a prokaryote.
11. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 10, wherein the promoter is T7, T3, or Sp6.

12. A method of preparing an infectious GBV-C comprising:

- a) incubating a nucleic acid molecule comprising GBV-C sequence under conditions effective to allow RNA transcription of the GBV-C sequence;
- b) collecting the RNA transcripts; and
- c) providing the RNA transcripts to a cell.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the RNA transcripts are provided to a cell by transfecting the cell with the transcripts.

14. The method of claim 12, further comprising:

- d) incubating the cell under conditions sufficient for viability;
- e) collecting the supernatant of the cell.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein the nucleic acid molecule comprises RNA.

16. The method of claim 12, wherein the nucleic acid molecule comprises DNA.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is an expression construct.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the expression construct comprises a promoter heterologous to the GBV-C sequence.

19. The method of claim 12, wherein the heterologous promoter promotes transcription in a prokaryote.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the promoter is T3, T7, or Sp6.

21. The method of claim 12, wherein the nucleic acid molecule further comprises a nucleic acid sequence that is heterologous to the GBV-C sequence and encodes a polypeptide.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the polypeptide is a mammalian polypeptide.

23. The method of claim 12, wherein the cell is a mammalian cell.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein the mammalian cell is a lymphocyte cell.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the lymphocyte cell is CD4+ lymphocyte cell.

26. The method of claim 12, wherein the RNA transcripts are about 9.4 kb in length.

27. The method of claim 12, wherein the nucleic acid molecule comprises SEQ ID NO:1.

28. An infectious GBV-C produced by a method comprising:

- a) providing a first cell with an isolated and purified nucleic acid molecule encoding an infectious GBV-C;
- b) incubating the first cell under conditions to permit viral replication; and
- c) collecting the supernatant of the first cell.

29. The infectious GBV-C of claim 28, wherein the nucleic acid molecule comprises a heterologous nucleic acid sequence.

30. The infectious GBV-C of claim 29, wherein the heterologous nucleic acid sequence encodes an antisense molecule.

31. The infectious GBV-C of claim 29, wherein the heterologous nucleic acid sequence encodes a polypeptide.

32. The infectious GBV-C of claim 31, wherein the polypeptide is a mammalian polypeptide.

33. The infectious GBV-C of claim 31, wherein the polypeptide is a non GBV-C viral polypeptide.

34. The infectious GBV-C of claim 28, wherein the first cell is a mammalian cell.

35. The infectious GBV-C of claim 34, wherein the mammalian cell is a CD4+ lymphocyte cell.

36. The infectious GBV-C of claim 27, wherein the method further comprises:

- d) contacting a second cell with the supernatant of the first cell;
- e) incubating the second cell under conditions to permit viral replication; and
- f) collecting the supernatant from the second cell.

37. A method of inhibiting HIV disease progression in a subject infected with HIV comprising administering to the subject an effective amount of an isolated and purified nucleic acid molecule encoding an infectious GBV-C sequence.

38. The method of claim 37, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is RNA.

39. The method of claim 38, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is DNA.

40. The method of claim 38, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is about 9.4 kb in length.

41. The method of claim 37, further comprising administering to the subject AZT or at least one protease inhibitor.

42. A method of inhibiting HIV infection in a subject comprising administering to the subject an effective amount of an isolated and purified nucleic acid molecule encoding an infectious GBV-C.

43. The method of claim 42, wherein the infection of CD4+ cells by HIV is inhibited.

44. A method of inhibiting a cell infected with HIV comprising administering to the cell an effective amount of an isolated and purified nucleic acid molecule encoding a GBV-C polypeptide in an amount effective to inhibit HIV replication in the cell.

45. The method of claim 44, wherein the isolated and purified nucleic acid molecule encodes an infectious GBV-C.

46. The method of claim 44, wherein the cell is a CD4+ cell.

47. The method of claim 44, further comprising administering to the cell AZT or a protease inhibitor.

48. The method of claim 44, wherein the cell is in an animal.

49. The method of claim 48, wherein the animal is a human.

50. A method of treating a subject infected with HIV comprising administering to a cell of the subject an effective amount of an infectious GBV-C comprising a heterologous nucleic acid sequence.

51. The method of claim 50, where in the cell is a CD4+ lymphocyte.

52. The method of claim 51, wherein the CD4+ lymphocyte is in the subject.

53. The method of claim 50, wherein the heterologous nucleic acid sequence comprises a sequence encoding a protease inhibitor.

54. The method of claim 50, wherein the heterologous nucleic acid sequence comprises a sequence encoding an antisense molecule.

55. A method of treating a subject infected with HIV comprising administering to the subject an effective amount of an expression construct comprising a GBV-C sequence, wherein said subject is provided a therapeutic benefit.

56. The method of claim 41, further comprising administering to the subject AZT or at least one serine protease inhibitor.

57. A method of expressing a heterologous nucleic acid sequence comprising providing to a cell an isolated and purified nucleic acid molecule encoding an infectious GBV-C sequence and the heterologous nucleic acid sequence.

58. The method of claim 57, wherein the heterologous nucleic acid sequence encodes a polypeptide.

59. The method of claim 58, wherein the polypeptide is an antigen.

60. The method of claim 57, wherein the cell is a mammalian cell.

61. The method of claim 60, wherein the mammalian cell is in a mammal.

62. A method of producing an immune response in a subject comprising administering to the subject an amount of an expression construct comprising GBV-C sequences and a heterologous nucleic acid sequence operably linked to a promoter, wherein the heterologous nucleic acid sequence encodes a polypeptide, effective to elicit an immune response against the polypeptide.